# CAPITAL ACCUMULATION, WOMEN'S WORK, AND INFORMAL ECONOMIES IN KOREA

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Abstract: The key issue concerning "women in development" is not their lack of integration but the forms of their integration into the national and international economic processes. This paper investigates changing forms of Korean women's economic activities according to the dominant pattern of capital accumulation that characterized the rapid economic growth of Korea in the past two decades. Analysis of labor statistics and a sample survey revealed the following changes in Korean women's economic activities: (1) rapid absorption of the female labor force into the industrial sector--the proletarianization of female workers has been faster than that of male workers; (2) intensification of agricultural work for rural women due to the increasing shortage of labor in rural areas; and (3) active involvement of married women in various forms of informal earning activities--class differences in types of informal earnings exist but both middle-class and working-class women are active in informal economic activities. The paper demonstrates that the form of women's work is intimately affected by the inter-connection between capital accumulation and gender relations in society.

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# CAPITAL ACCUMULATION, WOMEN'S WORK, AND INFORMAL ECONOMIES IN KOREA[1]

Much of the attention that has been given to "women in development" has been motivated primarily by an instrumental reason: how to integrate women into the development process and have them contribute more to increased production, population control, and maintenance of family members in accordance with the demands of the modernizing economy.[2] Curiously, however, it has often escaped the minds of most scholars working in this field that women have been, and are, always integrated into the economic process of the society. They contribute to the country's economic development not only as factory workers, sales girls and secretaries, but also as farmers, helpers in family enterprises and, most commonly, as domestic workers. Behind developmentalists' great concern with women's integration into development, there is an implicit assumption that only those activities of women included in the calculation of Gross National Product (GNP) contribute to national development. Consequently, most analyses of women's work have narrowly focused on female labor force participation rates (as registered in labor statistics) in relation to measures of economic growth. That labor statistics grossly underrepresent women's economic acitivities and often make arbitrary distinctions between economically active and inactive women frequently is ignored in these analyses.

This study investigates the relationship between economic development and women's work in one rapidly industrializing country, South Korea. Unlike most previous work on the topic, we do not regard change in the rate of female labor force participation--or, as commonly stated, the degree of female integration into the development process--as the most problematic issue. We assume that women's work is always an integral part of the national economic process, as integral as men's work is. The issue is not the degree but the form of integration. The question we investigate is thus how women's economic activities have changed in relation to the pattern of economic growth in South Korea in the past two decades.

To answer this question adequately, a substantial conceptual broadening, or redefinition, is necessary on two fronts: women's work and development. Perhaps one of the most important conclusions of the past decade's work on women's role in economic development is that women's work itself must be taken as a basic sociological issue. Boserup has pointed out the tendency of the official labor statistics to underestimate subsistence activities, a substantial proportion of which are carried on by women.[3] More recently scholars have begun to stress that it is very difficult to make a clear distinction between "work" and "nonwork," or "workplace" and "household," in the case of women's work.[4] A study of women's work which is based narrowly on the conventional labor statistics is bound to seriously underrepresent the magnitude of women's total economic activities. Moreover, such an approach will miss more interesting ways a large number of women are involved in income-earning activities.

What is special about women's work is that it is usually "invisible." A woman's domestic work as a housewife and a mother is a special case in point. But even much of her productive work as a family helper in subsistence production or as an irregular earner in urban informal economies is also invisible, in the sense that such work is not recognized as a job either by society or by the individual herself. In the present study, we examine all

forms of Korean women's income earning activities, both formal and informal, and both visible and invisible. Most casual and irregular income-earning activities of women are not registered in labor statistics, so a trend analysis of women's informal activities is not possible. Thus, we try to capture the major change in Korean women's economic activities by analyzing the conventional labor statistics for the period of 1960 to 1980. Then we explore the extent and the nature of Korean women's informal earning activities using data gatnered from 239 married women in Seoul in 1980.

In examining the relationships between economic development and women's economic activities, we do not conceptualize development simply as GNP increase or even industrial productivity increase. Nor do we conceive of it as merely a structural differentiation along a certain evolutionary process. This is not to suggest that economic development does not involve these changes. Rather, what we are primarily concerned with is the capital accumulation process which is at the core of capitalist economic development. This is a crucial thesis of the current scholarship on the political economy of Third World development--namely, that the development process must be conceptualized as a capital accumulation process which occurs on a worldwide scale.[5] This perspective helps us to avoid viewing all societies necessarily moving along a certain common evolutionary process presumably already traversed by Western industrial societies, but instead to focus on basic changes in the relations of production and expropriation. In this framework, we cannot understand the development process simply in terms of increase in GNP or energy consumption but must examine the concrete ways that capital accumulation occurs in the society.

Dependency and world system theorists have established that capital accumulation is a global process and that the accumulation process in a given Third World capitalist country is largely determined by the way its economy is integrated into the world capitalist system. An important trend in the current phase of global accumulation is the movement of advanced capital to peripheral economies in East Asia and Latin America in the pursuit of low-cost production for export. The countries integrated into this new stage of worldwide accumulation, of which South Korea is a prime example, have undergone a rapid process of export-oriented industrialization and, by and large, have achieved impressive rates of economic growth in the late sixties and seventies. It is this pattern of industrialization we must understand in order to explain how Korean female labor power has been integrated into the development process as well as how the nature of Korean women's work has been transformed.[6]

In what follows, we first describe briefly some of the dominant changes in the Korean economy since 1960 and examine labor statistics to see how the pattern of female labor force participation has changed according to these structural changes. Since the female population is by no means homogeneous, we pay attention not only to the aggregate pattern but also to variation between age groups and between single and married women. We pay special attention to a woman's marital status because it reflects her special role in the sphere of reproduction. Next, we try to go beyond the narrow defini-

tion of women's economic activities embedded in official labor statistics and attempt to grasp the "invisible" area of Korean women's income-earning activities. As will be discussed below, we found the conventional approach to informal economic activities wanting. We therefore approach the problem more broadly, not simply as a survival strategy of the urban poor but as the collective efforts of families in all classes to improve their economic situations and social statuses.[7] We believe that the data we present are unique and suggest several important implications not only for the study of women's work in developing societies but also for better understanding of the Third World development process itself.

## Accumulation Pattern in Recent Korean Development

When Korea was emancipated from 36 years of Japanese rule in 1945, it was predominantly a preindustrial, agrarian society. Two years after the Republic of Korea was born in the southern half of the peninsula in 1948, the Korean War broke out. After the war ended, the South Korean economy was maintained largely through infusions of U.S. military and economic aid up to the late 1950s. It was not until the emergence of the military government of the late President Park in 1961 that the Korean economy assumed its specific role in the world division of labor as a supplier of a qualified and cheap labor force.

The major policy the Korean government has pursued since the early 1960s is labor-intensive, export-oriented industrialization. As has been widely publicized, South Korea achieved impressive rates of economic growth up to the end of the 1970s: the average GNP increases were 8.5 percent in the period of 1960-70 and 10.3 percent in the period of 1970-76.[8] The engine of this productivity growth was an export economy. Korea's exports to the world market, primarily to the United States and Japan, increased dramatically from 41 million U.S. dollars in 1961 to 882 million in 1970 and to 12.7 billion dollars in 1978. With this phenomenal increase in volume, the content of exports also changed drastically. In 1962, exports from Korea contained only 27 percent manufactured goods; in 1977 manufactured items constituted 88 percent. Propelled by dynamic growth in the labor-intensive, export-oriented manufacturing sector, the Korean industrial structure underwent a profound transformation. At the beginning of this structural change in 1961, only 9.9 percent of the gross national product was contributed by the secondary industrial sector (47.1 percent by the primary sector and 42.9 percent by the tertiary sector); but in 1978 the secondary sector contributed 32.9 percent (the primary sector contributed 19.1 percent and the tertiary sector 48.0 percent).

This structural change in production necessarily entailed a corresponding sectoral shift in the structure of the labor force, as will be examined in detail shortly. Of particular relevance to our purpose was the nature of capital accumulation by foreign and domestic capital through labor-intensive manufacturing for export markets. In neoclassical economic terms, this capital accumulation is based on the "comparative advantage" of low-wage, skilled labor of a developing country; in dependency theoretical terms it is

based on exploitation of docile, disciplined labor in a peripheral country. However one may like to label it, what is invariant is that this form of capital accumulation is ultimately based on the mobilization and incorporation of a large proportion of labor power into the export sector of production. By the nature of production in this sector, young female labor was most directly affected by this accumulation process.[9]

What was just described is only one part, though a major one, of the capital accumulation that occurred in Korean industrialization. Another important feature of the Korean pattern of accumulation was the informal or underground market for money-making. This is a hidden dimension of the Korean economy and there is no reliable information about it. Yet, anyone who is even superficially familiar with the Korean economy would have no doubt about the magnitude of the Korean curb market (private money-lending) and the role of speculative real estate investment in the rise of monopoly capital in Korea in the 1970s. In 1972, the Korean government attempted in vain to control the curb market. The media estimated at that time that as much as 65-70 percent of total cash flow occurred through curb markets.[10] A very recent money market scandal (in May, 1982) that shook the current government at its base also indicated a similar magnitude of curb markets.

The Korean economy has been afflicted with a very high, sustained rate of inflation. Combined with a shortage of land and the irrationality of government controls, this high inflation instigated a real estate investment boom in the mid-1970s. To many shrewd and fortunate people it provided an easy and quick way of making a lot of money, while it made it more difficult for the mass of the population to own their own houses or to cultivate their own land.

As will be demonstrated below, this huge market of private money-lending, real estate speculation, and other informal ways of making money is relevant not just to the rich but also to the middle- and even lower-class. Significantly, it is mainly women who are most active in this informal sector, at least among middle- and lower-class families. Thus, the extent and the nature of Korean women's economic activities must be explained by these two dominant modes of capital accumulation that have shaped the Korean economy since the early 1960s.

## Trend in Female Labor Force Participation

Korean women's labor force particiption has increased impressively since the Korean government embarked on export-led industrialization in the early 1960s. In 1965, about 48 percent of women aged 14 years or over were "economically active" as defined by official labor statistics. The proportion increased to about 57 percent in 1980. Since the meaning of labor force participation differs between farm and nonfarm sectors, we present in Table 1 the trends in labor force participation of women and men by sectors for the period of 1965 to 1980. During this period, female labor force participation rates increased from 31 percent to 36 percent in the nonfarm sector and from 41 percent to 53 percent in the farm sector. The increase was greater in the

farm sector. The rate of female labor force participation in the nonfarm sector was about half of that of males in 1980, but this represents improvement over the situation in 1965. (At that time, the female labor force participation was much higher in agriculture. Of particular importance is that in the farm sector, female labor participation has increased noticeably, while male labor participation has decreased.

The past two decades of rapid economic change are well reflected in the drastic sectoral shift in the composition of the labor force. Between 1960 and 1980, the proportion of the labor force in the primary sector decreased by more than half, from 80 percent to 34 percent. At the same time, the industrial labor force in the secondary sector quadrupled from 5 percent to 23 percent, while the share of the tertiary labor force increased from 15 percent to 43 percent. It is noteworthy that the proportion of industrial workers increased faster than that of service and commercial workers. This pattern is different from that often observed in Latin America or Africa where the most striking change seems to be the increase of marginal workers in personal service and commercial activities.[11] This indicates that Korean industrialization was far from being superficial.

A comparison of the sectoral distribution of male and female workers for 1960 and 1980 is presented in Table 2. The general direction of change was the same for both sexes, and the overall patterns of their distribution over the three industrial categories do not differ very much. Compared to men, female workers seem to be over-represented in the tertiary sector. For both sexes, increase in the secondary sector labor force was most drastic. Between 1960 and 1980, the number of female workers in the secondary sector increased 7.4 times (from 160 thousand to 1,178 thousand). Male workers in the same sector increased 6.3 times (from 303 thousand to 1,918 thousand). In comparison, the rates of increase in the tertiary sector were 2.1 times for female workers and 4.0 for male workers.

Thus, we can identify two discernable impacts of Korean export-led, labor-intensive industrialization on female labor force participation. One is the absorption of a large number of economically active women into the rapidly expanding export industries in the city. The other, less clearly visible but no less significant, is that as more and more able-bodied workers desert back-breaking farming for city jobs, the burden of farming falls disproportionately on the shoulders of women left in rural villages. We saw in Table 1 a noticeable increase in the female labor force participation rate in the farm sector, compared to a decreasing rate for their male counterparts. Correspondingly, the share of women in the total agricultural labor force increased from 36 percent in 1965 to 43 percent in 1980.

Table 3 shows occupational distributions for male and female workers in 1965 and 1980. Female occupational distribution gradually moved away from heavy concentration in farming to industrial and service occupations. Next to farming the largest proportion of females were engaged in production jobs, which employed one-fifth of all economically active women. Comparatively, sales occupations, the third largest category, did not increase as fast.

Together these three occupational categories absorbed three-fourths of the female labor force. The professional and clerical occupations employed a small proportion of female workers, but these two occupational categories also increased very rapidly. In fact, proportional increases in these categories were greater for women than for men. There is no doubt important sex differentiation within each of these categories (women are concentrated in secretarial, nursing and teaching jobs), but this does not deny the fact that the proportion of white-collar women increased as rapidly there as in any other occupational category.

In summary, the urban-based, export-linked capital accumulation in contemporary Korea is related to women's economic activities in three ways: (1) a dramatic increase of factory work in the city in which predominantly young single women were employed; (2) intensified agricultural work among rural women; and (3) a noticeable increase of white-collar jobs for a small proportion of women.

## The Impacts of Marital Status and Age

When talking about women's work, we cannot ignore women's role of reproduction. By reproductive role, we mean not simply biological reproduction but also socially defined responsibilities of women in the socialization of children and the maintenance of family members. It is this reproduction sphere that shapes the pattern of women's labor force participation as strongly as any other social force. The variables directly related to women's reproductive role are marital status and age. In Korean society, these two factors by and large define women's relations to reproduction.

Data in Table 4 demonstrate the remarkable difference between married and single women in their urban labor force participation. Among single women, those between 20 and 24 are the most economically active. In every age category, however, the participation rate of single women is two to six times that of married women. Age creates differences as well. Urban married women's employment is severely restricted up to age 34, clearly related to their reproductive roles and thenceforth gradually increases until they reach age 50 or older. Employment patterns in rural areas are quite different. Because rural work is not clearly separated from household work, there is little difference between married and single women's economic activities.

Sharp contrast in economic activities of married and unmarried women is found not only in the rates of labor force participation but also in terms of employment status, as shown in Table 5. While 88 percent of working, urban single women were wage workers, only 23 percent of working, urban married women worked for wages. In contrast, 40 percent of urban married women were self-employed workers but only 3 percent of single women were self-employed. Clearly, the meaning of labor force participation differs greatly between the two categories of women. Labor force participation means wage employment for the absolute majority of single women, whereas for married women it is more likely to mean self-employment or family work (such as shop assistance or craft work at home). A basically similar pattern of employment is found in rural areas, though the difference is not so salient.

The divergence of work patterns between married and single women is also found in their occupational distributions (Table 6). More than half of the single women working in the city were production workers, and the rest were most likely to be either service workers or clerical workers. In contrast, married women were more evenly spread across occupational categories. The largest proportion was in sales occupations, mainly self-employed work, followed by service, production, and agricultural jobs. In rural areas, however, occupational differences between married and unmarried women were minimal.

## Informal Earning Activities

According to the labor force participation statistics examined above (Table 1), only one-third of Korean women in their economically active ages were absorbed in the labor market in 1980. These statistics also indicated that less than one-fifth (18 percent) of married women were absorbed in the labor market. Where were the rest of the productive women? Were they all at home doing domestic work? Not exactly. A large proportion of women defined as idle according to official statistics were actually working, doing not just domestic work but also non-domestic remunerative work. Anyone familiar with Korean city life would realize that few Korean wives sit around until their husbands bring home their paychecks. In some way Korean society represents the most competitive form of capitalism--everyone seems to be out "hustling" for one more dollar every moment. But it is women's involvement in these activities that interests us at the present.

Economic activities which are not registered in standard labor statistics are labelled as "informal" economic activities. Hart originally introduced the term, "informal income opportunities."[12] These opportunities exist outside the formal employment structure and thus escape official enumeration. This is "the world of economic activities outside the organized labour force."[13] In Hart's conception, informal income opportunities encompass a wide-range of activities, from domestic service and petty trading through brokerage and craftmenship to rentier activities and commodity speculation.

While emphasizing the enormous heterogeneity of informal economic activities, Hart tends to identify these activities with the urban lower-class. He states that "denied success by the formal opportunity structure, these members of the urban sub-proletariat seek informal means of increasing their incomes."[14] Subsequently, this aspect of informal activities attracted much attention from social scientists working in international agencies such as the International Labour Office or the World Bank. In their hands the formal-informal distinction of <u>income opportunities</u> became reified in terms of <u>sectoral</u> dualism. Economists tend to divide the economic structure into the formal and informal sectors, using some arbitrary size of enterprises and are concerned mainly with the productivity potentials and the labor absorptive capacity of the informal sector. Consistent with this approach is "a tendency to consider 'the urban informal sector' and 'the urban poor' to be synonymous."[15]

Women's special relationship with the informal world of earning activities is obvious. A great number of Third World women work as street venders, domestic maids, and petty market traders. They also operate grocery stores, family restaurants, beauty parlors, and so on. These activities are especially important to married women, because informal activities do not make a clear separation between domestic and nondomestic work. Most of these jobs are very flexible and are held intermittently on an irregular basis. Thus, when a majority of wage-earning single women disappear from labor statistics after they marry, they are very likely to move into this invisible world of informal earning activities.

By the very nature of these activities, there is a paucity of reliable data on the extent of women's involvement in urban informal activities. A few studies that have probed into this question have confirmed our suspicion that indeed women's involvement in this economic area is very extensive in developing countries.[16] Here we present data gathered from 239 married women in Seoul in 1980.

The sample was selected in two stages. First, a purposive block sampling was taken to select four elementary schools representing four different socioeconomic strata. A simple random sampling was deliberately avoided because of the difficulty of obtaining sensitive information on informal earnings by approaching respondents anonymously. The strategy was to select school children's mothers and approach them with a letter of introduction from the child's teacher. In each school selected, ten students were randomly chosen from each of six grades. Altogether 240 mothers were chosen from four schools, sixty from each school. Respondents were interviewed at home.

Our sample is, of course, not representative of all Korean urban women, nor even of all married women in Seoul. The study is exploratory and is meant to show not more than a rough picture of this undocumented women's world of informal earning activities. As expected, our data reveal the importance of informal activities to married women in a Korean city. Of 239 valid cases, only twelve women (5 percent) have formal employment. Among the rest, who might be most likely to be defined as "economically inactive" by official labor statistics, 89 women (37 percent of the sample) are earning incomes through a variety of informal activities.[17]

As we discussed before, marriage is a critical factor in determining the likelihood of women's involvement in the formal sector of wage and salary employment. In our sample, a little more than half (51 percent) had formal employment before their marriage. But currently only 5 percent remain in wage employment (see Table 7). The likelihood of continuing to hold formal employment seems to be related to the type of jobs women had prior to marriage and presumably to their educational qualifications as well. Of those who worked in professional and technical occupations before marriage, about one-third still hold salaried jobs. In contrast, none of the women who were employed in manual positions remain in the labor force. There is an indication that a woman's propensity to remain in the formal employment structure is closely related to her occupational class position.

Probably the most important finding of our data is that informal earning activities are not restricted to urban poor families. It is found that middle-class women are almost as active as working-class women.[18] An important difference exists, however, between the two classes of women in terms of the type of informal earnings. We roughly distinguished informal activities into three types: (1) informal earnings based on capital utilization (e.g., money-lending, real estate investment, stock market speculation); (2) informal activities based primarily on physical labor, mostly simple labor but some requiring certain skills (e.g., domestic maid, temporary work in construction sites, craft production at home); and (3) activities based primarily on selling and buying (e.g., petty trading, street vending, running a shop or small restaurant).

Understandably, middle-class women are most likely to engage in informal earning activities that require a certain amount of capital investment.[19] About 21 percent of middle-class women in our sample are involved in these activities, while about 10 percent of working-class women are doing similar work. The largest proportion of working-class women (23 percent) are earning through informal activities that require physical work. In sharp contrast, only about 4 percent of middle-class women are involved in similar manual work. Petty trading is more prevalent among working-class women, but it is not insignificant among middle-class women either.

Informal workers are most frequently viewed as being "pushed" into the informal sector because they are unable to find jobs in the formal sector. This may be the case for domestic maids, hawkers, or casual workers in construction; but this is only a part of the whole picture. Many women actually prefer informal earning activities to formal employment. The greatest attraction of informal earning opportunities is the flexibility they offer in terms of time schedule and the minimal distinction they make between domestic and nondomestic work. It is this non-bureaucratic aspect of informal work that makes such activities particularly suitable to married women, especially to middle-class women.

The formal occupational structure is almost closed to married women in middle-class families. Many of them might have worked as secretaries, bank clerks or accountants; but these jobs are for single women--at least according to contemporary Korean social norms. If desperate, as lower-class women are, they might seek factory employment or work as waitresses or sales girls. But they are not, though their families need more money. For middle-class married women, it would not be "proper" to work in manual jobs; it would damage the status of their families. Thus, it is the lack of appropriate jobs in the formal sector and status considerations that lead a large proportion of middle-class women into informal earning activities. In short, informal activities mean more than a simple "survival kit" for the urban poor. The proliferation and intensity of women's informal earning activities in contemporary Korean cities are related to the peculiar nature of capital accumulation that has characterized the Korean development process until the present time.

## Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationships between the dominant mode of capital accumulation and the extent and forms of women's economic activities in Korea. Our analysis demonstrates direct relationships between the two phenomena. We found first that Korean women's participation in the formal labor market increased noticeably as rapid industrialization mobilized and absorbed an increasing proportion of the economically productive population into the urban, industrial labor force. If the increasing labor force participation rate means improving social status, as previous studies often assumed, Korean economic development definitely has had a positive effect on Korean women. At least, Korean women have been well integrated into the development process.

It was our central point, however, that the rate of labor force participation tells very little about women's situation in the society. More important is the form or the nature of women's economic activities. The labor statistics and the exploratory survey data which we examined revealed four interesting changes in Korean women's economic activities. First, as the urban-based, labor-intensive sector of export manufacturing rapidly expanded, a large proportion of young single women were absorbed into this industrial and modernized sector of the economy. A majority of these young women came from rural areas and were integrated into the core of dependent capital accumulation at the bottom of the hierarchical structure.

Second, as export-oriented industrialization and accompanying urbanization proceeded at an accelerated rate, rural areas were left with mostly old men and women plus some younger women whose husbands were trying to earn money in the city. This demographic change doubled the burden on rural women. While carrying out their traditional household work, these women had to become more actively involved in agricultural work. Labor statistics indicated that an increasing proportion of rural women became hired agricultural laborers.

Third, there was also a significant increase in professional and technical jobs for highly educated women. As the Korean economy became more complex and differentiated, more women were needed to fill the positions of school teachers, nurses, druggists, and the like. Sex differentiation in the occupational structure remained unchanged, but some noticeable occupational differentiation nonetheless occurred among the female population.

Fourth, Korean women's activities were intimately connected to another aspect of the capital accumulation process based on informal economies (which some Korean economists call the "second economy"). This is a largely hidden world of women's earning activities. In the absence of direct information, we still suspect that the magnitude and intensity of women's informal activities have greatly increased in the past two decades. Perhaps more important was the change in the forms of informal activities. If the previous pattern had been predominantly peddling, hawking and domestic services by lower-class women, the current pattern has become more diversified and

involves a great number of middle-class women. If the Korean pattern can be generalizable, we must reject identification of informal economies with lower-class people.[20] Informal activities do not simply represent a means of survival for the urban poor; they are also a means used by the well-to-do to increase their family incomes. It is the very nature of the macro economy that provided the economic environment for this interesting pattern of women's work.

Our analysis also highlighted the importance of women's reproductive role in shaping the form of women's work. It was found that marriage is a watershed in women's participation in the formal labor market. With marriage the majority of women moved away from wage employment toward involvement in informal economies, primarily because society places heavy emphasis on married women's domestic responsibilities as mothers and wives. This is not just a matter of social norms. Patriarchal norms encourage the occupational structure to practice discrimination against married women. Nevertheless, society does expect women, married or single, to contribute to family income. It seems to be this contradictory pressure that pushes many women into informal earning activities.

Lastly, our study raised a serious issue of class and sex interactions. This is a very important area which thusfar has been largely neglected.[21] Yet it is evident that women's material conditions, including their work, are deeply affected by their class positions. Our data hinted at the ways Korean women's informal activities are related to the class positions of their families. Doubtless, their participation in the formal occupational structure must also be shaped by their family class positions. Class relations among women themselves are also a significant issue which we could not touch on. The options of middle-class women in their economic activities (in the professional field or in lucrative informal economies) are greater than those of working-class women, not only because of their better educational qualifications or the greater family/resources they command, but also because they can free themselves from domestic chores by hiring domestic maids. Ignoring these intra-sex inequality relations may be as serious a mistake as ignoring inequalities between the sexes.

In conclusion, we fully agree with Beneria and Sen that adequate understanding of women's work in relation to economic development requires "a coherent analysis of the interconnections between capital accumulation, class formation, and gender relations."[22] We hope our analysis sheds some light on these complex relationships.

FOOTNOTES

1. We would like to thank Patricia Steinhoff for her helpful suggestions on an earlier version of this paper.

2. The so-called "developmentalist" approach, pioneered by Boserup, is excellently reviewed and critiqued by Lourdes Beneria and Gita Sen, "Accumulation, Reproduction, and Women's Role in Economic Development: Boserup Revisited," Signs 7 (Winter 1981): 279-298.

3. Ester Boserup, Women's Role in Economic Development (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1970).

4. Hanna Papanek, "Family Status Production: The 'Work' and 'Non-work' of Women," Signs 4 (Summer 1979): 775-781; Susan Tiano, "The Separation of Women's Remunerated and Household Work: Theoretical Perspective on 'Women in Development'," Working Papers on Women in International Development No. 2 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Office of Women in International Development, 1981).

5. Samir Amin, Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism (New York: Monthly Review, 1976); Alejandro Portes and John Walton, Labor, Class, and the International System (New York: Academic Press, 1981).

6. The analyses of this process in other societies are available in Linda Lim, Women Workers in Multinational Corporations, Michigan Occasional Papers no. 9 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Women's Studies Program, 1978); Robert Snow, "Multinational Corporations in Asia: The Labor-Intensive Factory," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 11 (October-December 1979); Helen Safa, "Runaway Shops and Female Employment: The Search for Cheap Labor," Signs 7 (Winter 1981): 418-433; Aline Wong, "Planned Development, Social Stratification and Sexual Division of Labor in Singapore," Signs 7 (Winter 1981): 434-452; Dorothy Elson and Ruth Pearson, "Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers: An Analysis of Women's Employment in Third World Export Manufacturing," Feminist Review 7 (Spring 1981): 87-107.

7. The notion of "informal" economic ac ivities will be discussed below.

8. See, for more detail, Major Statistics of Korean Economy, published every year by Korea Planning Board (Seoul, Korea).

9. The stratification effects of this process is analyzed in Hagen Koo, "Center-Periphery Relations and Marginalization: Empirical Analysis of the Dependency Model of Inequality in Peripheral Nations," Development and Change 12 (January 1981): 55-76.

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12. Keith Hart, "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana," Journal of Modern African Studies 11 (1973): 61-89.

13. Hart, p. 68.

14. Hart, p. 67.

15. Ray Bromley, "Introduction--The Urban Informal Sector: Why Is It Worth Discussing?" World Development 6 (1978): 1035. See other articles in this issue of World Development.

16. Lourdes Arizpe, "Women in the Informal Labor Sector: The Case of Mexico City," Signs 3 (Autumn 1977): 25-37; Bennetta Jules-Rosette, "Women's Work in the Informal Sector: A Zambian Case Study," Working Papers on Women in International Development No. 3 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Office of Women in International Development, 1982).

17. Informal activities here include all income earning activities which are carried on intermittently on an irregular basis with an unstable source of income. Some of these jobs, such as those of domestics may be held on a relatively long-term basis, but the jobs are not based on a contractually determined wage scale. Some of these activities are in principle subject to enumeration, but many of them, especially those earning activities which are not primarily based on physical labor but involve capital utilization or skilled services, largely escape official counting.

18. This has been also noted by Arizpe (n. 16 above).

19. Class distinction is made on the basis of the husband's occupational position. This is not necessarily because we assume that a family's social class is determined only by the male household head's occupational position, but because our primary interest is to see how a woman's informal activity is influenced by her husband's socioeconomic status. The middle- and the working-class dichotomy is based on the manual-nonmanual distinction, except for lower routine white-collar jobs which are classified into the working-class category.

20. Alejandro Portes and John Walton have advanced the most coherent theory of the role of informal economies within the world system perspective. But they too regard informal economies basically as the activities of the urban poor, or more specifically, of the exploited marginal workers. See Portes and Walton, Labor, Class, and the International System (New York: Academic Press, 1981): ch. 3.

21. See Joan Acker, "Women and Stratification: A Review of Recent Literature," Contemporary Sociology 9 (January 1980): 25-35.

22. Lourdes Beneria and Gita Sen, "Class and Gender Inequalities and Women's Role in Economic Development--Theoretical and Practical Implications," Feminist Studies 8 (Spring 1982): 161.

Table 1.

Labor Force Participation Rate by Sex and by Sector, 1965-1980 (%)

| Year | Nonfarm | | Farm | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| 1965 | 76.3 | 30.9 | 76.8 | 41.0 |
| 1970 | 75.1 | 29.8 | 75.2 | 48.2 |
| 1975 | 75.1 | 31.2 | 73.8 | 51.8 |
| 1980 | 74.2 | 36.1 | 72.4 | 53.0 |

Source: Korea Economic Planning Board (KEPB), Annual Report on Economically Active Population Survey.

Table 2.

Sectoral Distribution of Labor Force by Sex, 1960-1980

| Sex | | Industry | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary | |
| 1960: | Male | 75.8 | 5.7 | 18.5 | 100.0 (5,272,000) |
| | Female | 85.6 | 4.9 | 9.5 | 100.0 (3,250,000) |
| 1980: | Male | 30.9 | 22.7 | 46.4 | 100.0 (8,463,000) |
| | Female | 39.1 | 22.4 | 38.5 | 100.0 (5,263,000) |

Source: KEPB, Yearbook of Labor Statistics, 1961 and Annual Report on Economically Active Population Survey, 1981.

Table 3

Occupational Distribution of Males and Females, 1965-1980 (%)

| Occupational Category | 1965 | | 1980 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Prof. & adm. . . . . | 3.6 | 1.4 | 6.4 | 3.5 |
| Clerical . . . . . | 5.5 | 1.1 | 10.1 | 7.9 |
| Sales . . . . . | 9.9 | 15.6 | 13.2 | 16.5 |
| Service . . . . . | 5.4 | 8.6 | 5.4 | 12.0 |
| Agri. & related . . . . . | 55.5 | 63.8 | 30.9 | 38.9 |
| Prod. & related . . . . . | 20.1 | 9.3 | 34.1 | 21.1 |
| Total | 100.0 (5,322,000) | 100.0 (2,884,000) | 100.0 (8,462,000) | 100.0 (5,243,000) |

Source: See Table 1.

Table 4.

Female Labor Force Participation Rate by Age and by Marital Status, 1975

| Age | Urban | | Rural | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Single | Married | Single | Married |
| 15-19 | 44.9 | 13.0 | 51.9 | 54.7 |
| 20-24 | 67.9 | 10.6 | 75.1 | 56.5 |
| 25-29 | 66.1 | 12.3 | 70.7 | 58.9 |
| 30-34 | 58.6 | 17.4 | 64.9 | 68.2 |
| 35-39* | 54.9 | 22.3 | 51.7 | 75.4 |
| 40-44 | -- | 24.7 | -- | 79.8 |
| 45-49 | -- | 25.2 | -- | 80.6 |
| 50-54 | -- | 21.8 | -- | 78.7 |
| 55-59 | -- | 18.5 | -- | 63.6 |
| Total | 53.8 | 17.9 | 53.1 | 69.1 |

Source: KEPB, 1975 Population and Housing Census Report. Vol. 2, 3-1.

Note: 'Married' category does not include 'divorced' and 'widowed'.

*Single women who are aged 35 and over are all included in 35-39 age bracket.

Table 5.

Employment Status of Single and Married Women by Sector, 1975 (%)

| | Urban | | Rural | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Single | Ever-Married | Single | Ever-Married |
| Wage Employment | 87.7 | 22.8 | 23.8 | 2.3 |
| Self-employment | 2.9 | 39.6 | 3.6 | 19.7 |
| Family Work | 3.7 | 26.2 | 62.2 | 72.7 |
| Casual Work | 5.7 | 11.4 | 5.5 | 5.3 |
| Total | 100.0 (882,396) | 100.0 (711,264) | 100.0 (676,777) | 100.0 (2,619,561) |

Source: KEPB, 1975 Population and Housing and Census Report. Vol. 2, 3-2.

Note: 'Ever-Married' category includes 'currently married', 'divorced' and 'widowed'.

Table 6.

Occupational Distribution of Single and Married Women by Sector, 1975 (%)

| Occupational Category | Urban | | Rural | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prof. & adm. | 4.5 | 5.4 | 3.3 | 0.5 |
| Clerical | 16.1 | 2.2 | 4.9 | 0.1 |
| Sales | 5.3 | 37.5 | 2.7 | 5.4 |
| Service | 20.9 | 19.5 | 8.1 | 2.7 |
| Agri. & related | 1.8 | 17.1 | 63.5 | 88.1 |
| Prod. & related | 51.1 | 18.3 | 3.5 | 3.2 |
| Total | 100.0 (882,396) | 100.0 (711,264) | 100.0 (676,777) | 100.0 (2,619,561) |

Source: See Table 5.

Note: 'Ever-Married' category includes 'currently married', 'divorced' and 'widowed'.

Table 7.

Change in Women's Economic Activities after Marriage

| Occupational Category Before Marriage | Present | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Formal | Informal | None | |
| Professional & technical | 30.8 | 30.8 | 38.4 | 100.0(13) |
| Clerical | 4.3 | 29.0 | 66.7 | 100.0(69) |
| Manual | -- | 57.1 | 42.9 | 100.0( 7) |

Source: Survey interviews.

Table 8.

Types of Informal Activities by Class

| Class | Formal employment | Informal employment | | | No earning | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Capital-based | Labor-based | Trading | | |
| Middle class | 8.0 | 20.5 | 3.6 | 5.4 | 62.5 | 100%(112) |
| Working class | 2.4 | 9.5 | 22.8 | 11.8 | 53.5 | 100%(127) |

Source: Survey interviews.

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